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ABSTRACT

Following the economic recession of the early 1980's and the consequent high levels of unemployment in Rock County, a program was created at the Blackhawk Technical Institute (BTI) to assist dislocated workers reentering the labor force. The Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was intended as a comprehensive program with two principal activities - job search assistance in which all program participants enrolled; and career advisement to which dislocated workers who failed to find new employment after four weeks were referred. A study was later conducted to compare the differences in outcomes, including levels of job satisfaction and starting wages, between workers who had participated in both areas and those who participated only in job search assistance. Questionnaires were sent to 110 participants in job search assistance and to 108 who had taken part in both areas requesting information on the workers' job satisfaction and background information. Study findings, based on responses from 28.7% of the job search group and 50.9% of the career advisement sample, indicated that attitudes on job satisfaction and the starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers were unrelated to the types of services received at BTI. The study includes an examination of the implications of the findings and recommendations. The questionnaire is appended. (HB)

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A COMPARISON OF STARTING WAGES AND JOB SATISFACTION FOR REEMPLOYED DISLOCATED WORKERS PARTICIPATING IN THE ROCK COUNTY DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM

APPLIED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION SEMINAR

by

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Blackhawk Technical Institute

A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF STARTING WAGES AND JOB SATISFACTION FOR REEMPLOYED DISLOCATED WORKERS PARTICIPATING IN THE ROCKCOUNTY DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM

The Blackhawk Technical Institute (BTI) serves a two county area in southcentral Wisconsin. One of the counties, Rock County, was one of the areas in the nation hardest hit by the recession and economic downturn. Massive unemployment and worker displacement threatened the economic structure of the area. The Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was initiated to assist dislocated workers reentering the labor force.

The Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was intended as a comprehensive program. The two principle activities were job search assistance and career advisement. Job search assistance was the initial component. All program participants enrolled in this activity. Dislocated workers who failed to find new employment after four weeks were referred to career advisement. Career advisement, through vocational assessment, career planning, and counseling, was designed to help participants set occupatinal goals and establish a career plan. Retraining and basic academic education necessary to obtain a new job were also identified during career advisement. Eventually, all participants returned to job search assistance for placement.

The purpose of the study was to analyze the impact of job search assistance and career advisement. The outcomes examined in the study were job satisfaction and starting wages of dislocated workers who had obtained new jobs. It was hypothesized that career advisement would

have a positive impact on the job satisfaction and starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers. Therefore, by participating in both job search assistance and career advisement, dislocated workers would have greater satisfaction with the jobs they obtained and would be employed in jobs paying higher starting wages than dislocated workers who only participated in job search assistance.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), modified to include a question on starting wages was the instrument used to collect the data. The MSQ was administered to dislocated workers who had enrolled only in job search assistance and those who had participated in both job search assistance and career advisement. Findings from the two groups were compared for significant differences in outcomes using an independent t-test. Significant differences in outcomes would indicate a need to restructure components within the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program.

The findings of the study do not support the hypotheses. The results failed to identify significant differences in outcomes between the two groups. Attitudes on job satisfaction and starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers were unrelated to the types of services received. Since job satisfaction and starting wages were not contingent on the type of assistance received prior to acquiring a new job, the study failed to document the need to restructure program components. It was recommended that rather than a highly structure program with a defined sequence of activities, dislocated workers should be given options, and allowed to select program components they believe will meet their needs.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Blackhawk Technical Institute (BTI) serves a two county area in southcentral Wisconsin. One of the counties, Rock County, was one of the hardest hit areas in the state, in fact in the nation, by the recession and economic downturn. Unemployment in the county has been extremely high, exceeding the national average, for most of the last four years.

The economic and labor base of Rock County is industrial with durable goods manufacturing comprising one-third of all non-agricultural employment. Many industries in the county laid off workers as inflation, high interest rates and generally tight money policies eroded consumer buying power. The slump in automobile sales and other consumer purchases had a particularly significant impact on the area.

Some jobs were temporarily lost due to cyclical factors, and the easing of recessionary conditions resulted in many unemployed workers being recalled. However, a large number of jobs were permanently lost due to technological and structural changes in manufacturing processes. Many workers were not laid-off; they had been displaced or dislocated.

The problem was so acute that Rock County had been designated as one of five counties in Wisconsin to receive a special state grant to assist these workers reenter the labor force. The local offices of the Wisconsin Job Service joined with the Blackhawk Technical Institute to administer the grant for the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program.

The program provided a variety of services intended to help these displaced workers obtain new jobs.

The services provided under this project had been generally successfully with approximately two-thirds of the dislocated workers who participated in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program acquiring new jobs. However, there were differences of opinion between BTI and Job Services personnel regarding the structure of program components. Job Service believed that dislocated workers had sufficient occupational skills and work experience to obtain new jobs. They required only supervised job search assistance. BTI staff, on the other hand, believed that this approach caused dislocated workers to accept any job that was available. It would be more appropriate for dislocated workers to undergo career advisement which would enable them to target their job search efforts in occupational areas that were personally meaningful. Thus, they would earn a higher starting wage and have greater satisfaction with their new job.

Statement of the Problem

The Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was designed to assist dislocated workers find new employment. A variety of activities were conducted, but job search assistance and career advisement were the two primary components. It was unclear if the structure of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was the best organization of activities to achieve the intended purposes. Specifically, there was no evidence on the effectiveness of job search assistance and career advisement in

assisting dislocated workers reestablish themselves in the workforce. The problem investigated in this ex-post facto study was whether or not career advisement had a greater impact on improving the starting wage and job satisfaction of dislocated workers who obtain new jobs compared to dislocated workers who do not participate in career advisement.

Statement of Purpose

The Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was intended as a comprehensive program to assist workers permanently displaced from their jobs become reemployed. The two principle activities were job search assistance and career advisement. Obtaining new employment, however, does not necessarily end the problems experienced by dislocated workers. The job must provide adequate financial compensation and be perceived as personally meaningful otherwise dislocated workers may have adjustment problems which could threaten productivity and future job security.

The purpose of the study was to analyze the impact of job search assistance and career advisement. The outcomes examined in the study were job satisfaction and starting wages of dislocated workers who had obtained new jobs. It was hypothesized that career advisement would have a positive impact on the job satisfaction and starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers. Therefore, by participating in both job search assistance and career advisement, dislocated workers would have greater satisfaction with the jobs they obtained and would be employed in jobs paying higher starting wages than dislocated workers who only participated in job search assistance.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), modified to include a question on starting wages was the instrument used to collect the data. The MSQ was administered to dislocated workers who had enrolled only in job search assistance and those who had participated in both job search assistance and career advisement. Findings from the two groups were tested for significant differences in outcomes using an independent t-test.

Since the purpose of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was to help displaced workers secure new jobs and regain stability in their lives, it was important to determine if one of the program components resulted in more positive employment related outcomes. Knowing that a particular component resulted in jobs with higher wages and greater satisfaction would be useful in organizing program activities to better meet the needs of dislocated workers. The results of the study provided information needed to make decisions about the structure of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The problems caused by worker dislocation are varied and complex, attacking the very foundation of local labor and economic structures. Affected communities have responded to the problems by instituting diverse programs of job search assistance, occupational skill training and retraining, and related supportive services. In southcentral Wisconsin, the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was initiated to assist workers permanently displaced from their jobs reenter the workforce. Two out of every three dislocated workers served through the program had returned to work. Returning to work, however, did not guarantee that the problems experienced by dislocated workers had ended. Unless reemployed workers obtained jobs that are meaningful and satisfying, and permit the individual and his family to maintain an adequate standard of living, the distress of dislocation will continue.

Background

The labor and economic structures of society are changing. These changes clearly have altered the nature of work and the impact can be seen in the current unemployment situation. Unemployment is caused by a complicated set of factors, some of which are temporary or cyclical, others are structural and, therefore, permanent. Jobs lost to structural changes will not reappear and the transition this causes means dislocation for many workers. "Structurally unemployed" is the term used to describe

"the growing ranks of skilled, middle-class workers whose jobs have been wiped out by imports, obsolescence and the restructuring of U. S. industry" (McClenahen, 1984:36).

The problems of structural unemployment have had a very dramatic impact in Rock County. The county is heavily industrialized and has been extremely hard hit by changes in technology, foreign trade barriers, industrial processes, and consumer patterns. The impact can be better understood by reviewing unemployment data for the recession in the early 1970s and comparing it to economic conditions in the 1980s. The recession in the early 1970s was caused by cyclical factors and Rock County was generally unaffected. However, the county was staggered by double digit unemployment, often among the highest levels in the United States, during the most recent economic crisis. The recession of the early 1980s was structural and it attacked the very foundation of the Rock County economy - manufacturing, particular the production of consumable goods. A large number of jobs were permanently lost in Rock County due to technological innovation and structural changes in manufacturing processes. For many people, the job they once had no longer exists. These workers are not unemployed; they are displaced or dislocated.

While economic recovery returned many unemployed workers to their jobs, for many others there was no job to return to. "We can no longer assume, as in the past, that the unemployed worker's job will automatically be restored with economic recovery" (Frey, 1983:86). Jobs lost to structural changes will not reappear and the transition this

causes means dislocation for many workers. "It means that workers must stop doing old jobs and learn new ones" (Cooper, 1983:536).

Retraining dislocated workers will be an important economic and labor challenge in the next ten years (Ziemke, 1983:7). This thought was echoed by Wright (1983:22) who called "retraining of an undereducated, manufacturing oriented adult population" a major economic development task. In fact, some economic experts call retraining the only rational approach to unemployment rather than other action such as trade barriers and labor protections (Levitan, 1982:119). A seminar on retraining, sponsored by the Androscoggin Adult Vocational Education Council identified basic academic skill education and vocational skill upgrading and retraining as vital training needed for unemployed adults (Wright 1983:22).

But comprehensive and well coordinated training initiatives might not be sufficient to help dislocated workers overcome the problems of not working (Barton, 1983:23). Reliable occupational information, career counseling and development, and job search techniques are other types of assistance needed by dislocated workers in addition to remedial education and vocational skill training. Also important, and maybe even more important, will be personal counseling to help the individual cope with the stress of unemployment. Typically, dislocated workers "experience five stages of job crisis: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and, eventually, acceptance" (Atkins, 1983:29). Unless these emotional aspects are addressed, the individual could find the situation hopeless and give up.

Training and retraining for human development, according to Wright (1983:24), is essentially and ultimately a local task. Efforts to assist dislocated workers must not stop with retraining. Job search assistance, career development and planning, and supportive counseling are also important. This too is a local task so assistance can be designed to meet the unique needs of dislocated workers and targeted toward employment opportunities within a particular area without causing large scale relocation or out-migration. The Blackhawk Technical Institute along with the local offices of the Wisconsin Job Service have assumed this challenge in Rock County and have designed a diversified program to help dislocated workers find new jobs.

Finding a new job, however, does not necessarily solve the problems of dislocated workers. Dislocated workers must reconcile their new jobs with previous employment. While obtaining a job is a priority for dislocated workers, unless that job is meaningful and satisfying adjustment problems will occur which threaten the workers productivity on the job. Job dissatisfaction leads to high turnover, tardiness, loafing on the job disruptions, poor workmanship and indifference to customers or clients (Cherrington, 1980:96). It is important, therefore, to assess the job satisfaction of reemployed dislocated workers, and to use this information to reorganize and improve the components of dislocated worker assistance programs.

Job satisfaction studies have been conducted since the early 1900s, but Hoppock's Job Satisfaction (1935) was the first comprehensive study (Dawis, 1981:3). His findings showed that most workers were

satisfied with their jobs which, in retrospect, was not very surprising because he conducted his survey during the Depression when workers were thankful just to have a job. During poor economic conditions, more workers express satisfaction with their jobs because they know they must accomodate themselves to it because that job is the only way to earn a living and support a family (Bluestone, 1977:174).

Job satisfaction is normally seen as resulting from the nature or type of job a person has. "Good jobs have been thought to increase satisfaction, while repetitive, menial work has been cited as the cause for boredom, alienation and discontent" (Cherrington, 1980:96). No one, however, has been able to identify the characteristics of a good job because it is based on individual perception. As a result job satisfaction studies have examined a wide variety of dimensions and work related variables.

Early studies of job satisfaction examined working conditions and economic incentives. The Hawthorn studies (1939) were the first to show the importance of human relationships to job satisfaction. These studies showed that job satisfaction was more frequently determined by supervisor and work group relationships than by pay, fringe benefits and physical working conditions (Dawis, 1981:3).

Research since the early 1950s has examined job satisfaction from the individual motivation or personal need satisfaction perspective. Maslow's work on motivation and personality, and his theories about self-actualization were highly influencial. Maslow stated that "individuals are often motivated to seek personal growth and development as a result

of dissatisfaction with their present state" (Sexton, 1977:133). Subscribing to Maslow's theory of motivation, Roe showed that "employment satisfies human needs at all levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, from the most basic physiological safety needs to the higher order need for self-actualization" (Dawis, 1981:4).

Herzberg and his associates, influenced by Maslow's work, developed a two factor theory of job satisfaction. His theory identified two sets of factors in the work setting: "a set of motivators or satisfiers (such as work itself, achievement, promotion, recognition and responsibility) related only to job satisfaction, and a second set called hygiene factors or dissatisfiers (such as supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, compensation, and company policies and practices) relating only to job dissatisfaction" (Dawis, 1981:4).

Many studies have been built on the Herzberg theory. From this research has come general agreement on a basic list of job satisfaction variables. Kasl (1977:89) believed that job satisfaction measures, however, reflect only the end result of a person's adaption to his job and its shortcomings. "Job satisfaction measures are too static and tend to disguise and distort the whole process of man's adaption to and his coping with, the discrepancy between his needs and the satisfaction of these needs by the work environment." (Kasl, 1977:103). Kasl (1977:102) also believed that "dissatisfier" variables were more easily modified than "satisfier" dimensions. He developed the "person-environment (P-E) fit" model. This model recognized job satisfaction as a result

of interaction and not determined by either dimensions of the person or the environment alone (Heisler, 1977:47).

Numerous other research has examined various aspects of job satisfaction. Vroom's Valence-Instrumentality Expetancy Theory (VIE) focused on performance and work behavior (Dawis, 1981:4). The relationship between personal need satisfaction and job satisfaction was studied by Schaffer (Dawis, 1981:4). Adam's Equity Theory pointed out the importance of social comparisons; Katzel regarded dissatisfaction as the discrepancy between stimulus experienced and the value of the stimulus; Locke considered job satisfaction as a result of the individual's job value and its congruence with personal needs; and Smith and others studied work expectations and their relationship to job satisfaction (Dawis, 1981:4-5). These studies have pointed out some significant relationships between job satisfaction and the meaningfulness of work, work values or work ethics, and job enrichment.

The meaningfulness of work is dependent on the individual's personal value system. "Something is meaningful to the extent that it is consistent with a framework of values in which certain actions or conditions are considered desirable and good . . . and perceived as a step in the direction of some larger and more enduring end state" (Cherrington, 1980:236). Although work responsibilities may be challenging, and may be a factor in determining meaningfulness, unless it is consistent with the worker's personal value system it may not be perceived as meaningful.

Work itself is good and, therefore, rewarding. If this attitude is espoused, then work, even if menial and demanding, would provide the worker with a feeling of satisfaction and personal worth. An important factor affecting the relationship between work values and job satisfaction, however, is the selectivity of worker perception to positive and negative aspects of the job. People selectively see only what they want to see. Therefore, a worker who sees work as desirable and important is likely to be more satisfied with the job compared to someone who thinks work is unimportant and sees only the negative and undesirable aspects (Cherrington, 1980:100). Regardless of the explanation, work values have been positively related to job satisfaction (Cherrington, 1980:231).

Because there are many dimensions to job satisfaction, there are a number of different methods to improve job satisfaction. Job enrichment is a method of increasing job satisfaction. Kraft (1975:35) believed that the basic contribution of job enrichment was to make work more meaningful, and to provide employees with a greater sense of responsibility and a better knowledge of the results of their endeavors. The problems experienced with most job enrichment efforts stem from individual differences with workers. "Differences in abilities, backgrounds and social conditions affect the specific psychological need patterns of employees and the specific returns that each may seek from work" (Scott, 1973:314). Due to these differences, work that is monotonous, unchallenging and boring to one person may be fulfilling and satisfying to another. The commitment of a company to job enrichment

and the perception of the employee to those efforts has a significant bearing on job satisfaction.

The many studies have established the common dimensions of job satisfaction and there is general agreement on these basic variables. Chruder (1980:33) identified ten key variables of satisfaction:

1. Variety (tools, equipment, activities, and work place).
2. Autonomy (independence and control in performing the job).
3. Interaction (the number and type of interrelationships).
4. Knowledge and skills (time required for proficiency).
5. Responsibility (closeness of supervision and cost of mistakes).
6. Task identify (how one's contributions add to the total effort).
7. Feedback (being kept informed).
8. Pay (wages and fringe benefits).
9. Working conditions (physical work environment).
10. Cycle time (time required to perform a unit of work).

Reinforcing the importance of these variables on job satisfaction, Kasl (1977:94) summarized the findings of a number of studies when he identified that low job satisfaction is related to the following factors:

1. Conditions of Work: Presence of health and safety hazards, and unpleasant work conditions, such as fast-paced and physically demanding work (if this is forced on the worker); afternoon and night shifts; unclear tasks; lack of control over work, such as pacing.

2. Work Itself (Job Content): Inability to use skills and abilities; highly fractionalized, repetitive tasks involving few diverse operations.

3. The Work Group: Lack of opportunity to interact with co-workers; work groups which are too large and lack cohesiveness; nonacceptance by co-workers.

4. Supervision: No participation in decision-making; inability to provide feedback to supervision; lack of recognition for good performance; supervisors who are not considerate and understanding.

5. The Organization: Large organization with a "flat" organizational structure (relatively few levels in the organization); having a staff position (vs a line position); discrimination in hiring.

6. Wages and Promotion: Low financial reward levels or perceived inequities in wages; lack of promotional opportunities.

The review of the literature identified the dimensions of job satisfaction. These variables were used in determining the job satisfaction experienced by dislocated workers who had participated in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program and who had obtained new jobs. When compared with job entry wages, job satisfaction measures were used to examine the effectiveness of Rock County Dislocated Worker Program components in helping dislocated workers find meaningful and satisfying employment.

Significance

Not much is known about dislocated workers who had obtained new employment following participantion in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. The significance of the study was that it was the first formal effort to follow-up on reemployed dislocated workers in Rock county and to assess the impact of program components in helping them return to the workforce. The study was also significant because it compared outcomes between program components. The study provided baseline data that could be used to make decisions about the structure or organization of program activities in the future. Differences noted in outcomes could result in reorganization of program components to better serve the needs of dislocated workers in the future. The fact that this was the first

research in Wisconsin to evaluate the effectiveness of dislocated worker program components gave this study added significance. Results from this study could be used to s`ructure services to dislocated workers in other areas of Wisconsin.

The principles learned in the Applied Research and Evaluation Seminar were applied in conducting the study. Research techniques and procedures learned in the seminar were used in a practical application that benefited the Blackhawk Technical Institute. The outcome of the study was valuable information that will enhance activities in the Rock County Dislocated Workers Program and improve services to workers permanently displaced from the workforce.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURES

Recent economic conditions have had a devastating impact on Rock County and have resulted in massive unemployment and worker displacement. Providing reemployment and training for dislocated workers has been an economic development priority for the area. It was also a human resource development imperative directed by the need to maintain a qualified and competent workforce. Efforts were directed toward assisting the many capable, reliable and productive workers reenter the labor force in jobs that were meaningful and satisfying. The activities and services provided through the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program were modeled after similar programs conducted in other areas of the United States. The structure of program components, however, was based on the perceived needs of the local population. A flow chart of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program is shown in Figure 1.

Job search assistance was the initial component. All dislocated workers who entered the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program enrolled in job search assistance. Job search was the first activity because it was assumed that Rock County dislocated workers posssessed the occupational skills and work experience needed to obtain new jobs, but they lacked the job seeking skills needed to systematically search for employment. It was believed that instruction in job seeking skills coupled with a structured job search would return workers to the labor force.

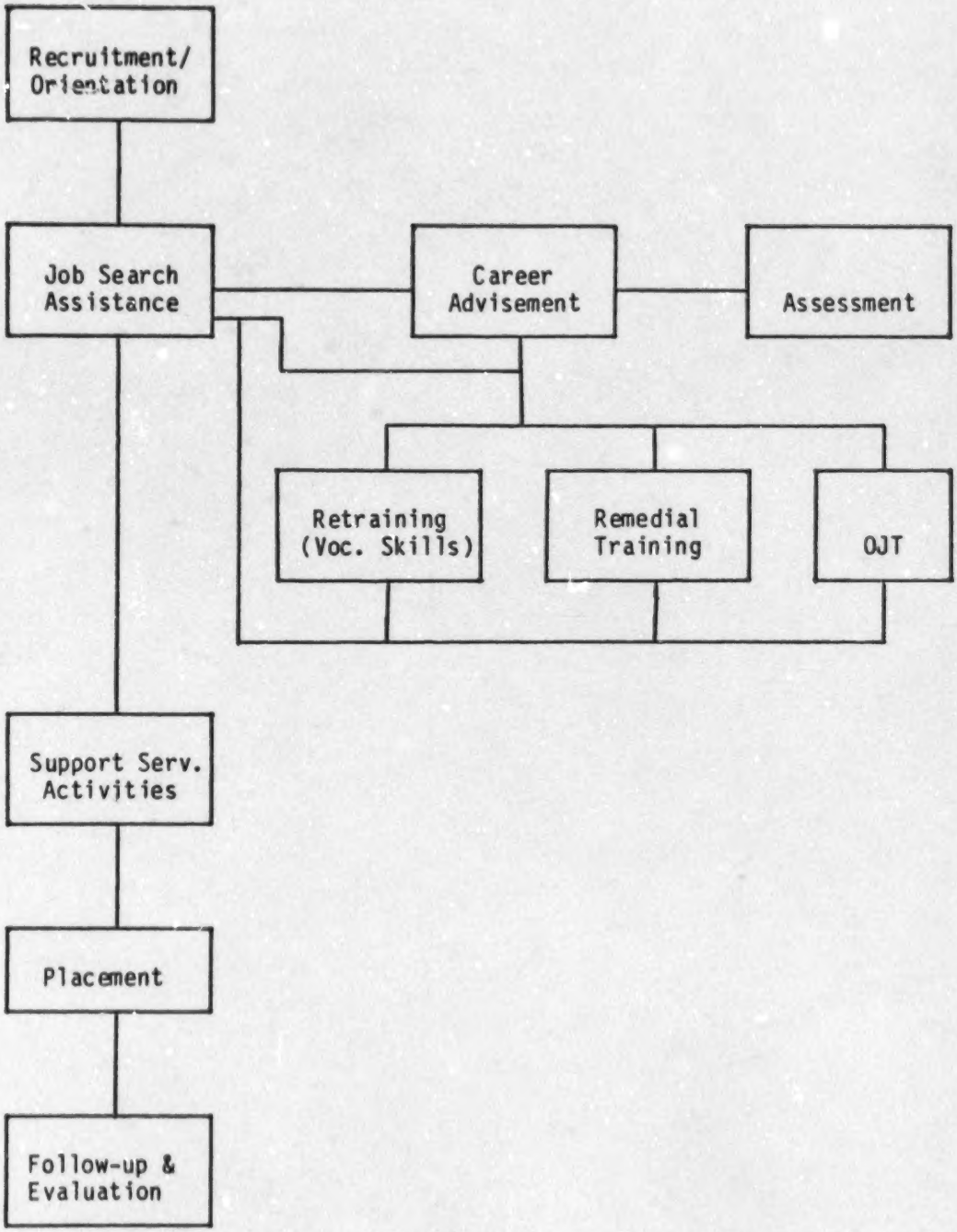

Figure 1

FLOW CHART FOR THE ROCK COUNTY
DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM

Workers who failed to find new employment after four weeks were referred for career advisement. Career advisement, through vocational assessment, career planning, and counseling, was intended to help dislocated workers set occupational goals and establish a career plan. Occupational skill retraining or basic academic education necessary to obtain a new job of was also identified during the career advisement phase. When they reentered job search, career advisement provided participants with a clearer understanding of their occupational interests, aptitudes and goals. This approach was thought to help dislocated workers target their reemployment efforts toward jobs that were personally meaningful.

After they completed the one-week career advisement, dislocated workers either entered retraining or returned to job search. Educational opportunities mainly consisted of enrollment into one of the postsecondary occupational skill training programs conducted by BTI. Several special short-term retraining and skill upgrading courses were also offered. Dislocated workers who enrolled in retraining returned to job search assistance upon completion of their program. All participants in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program participated in job search assistance for job placement.

Initial job search assistance may be valid in times of cyclical unemployment, but it was unclear how effective this approach would be during structural unemployment when workers were forced to change occupations. It was assumed that career advisement along with job search assistance better prepared dislocated workers to make the transition

than job search assistance alone. Job search assistance, as the sole reemployment activity, was compared to a combination of job search assistance and career advisement to determine which approach was more effective in helping dislocated workers reenter the workforce. Outcomes that were examined included the mean starting wage and the attitudes regarding job satisfaction of dislocated workers who found new jobs.

Methods

Dislocated workers who participated in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program were surveyed to identify their job entry wage and assess their satisfaction with their new job. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), published by the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Minnesota, was the instrument used to collect data on job satisfaction. The MSQ was developed based on research conducted as part of the Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation, better known as the Work Adjustment Project, and was designed to measure the satisfaction of an individual's needs through work. Data on starting wages was collected by modifying the demographic section of the MSQ to include a question about wages. Since the demographic section was general information, modification of the form to include a questions on starting wages was not a change which would compromise the validity of the MSQ as an instrument to measure job satisfaction.

The MSQ was available in both a long- and short-form. The long-form consisted of 100 items grouped into 20 block or scales. It had been normed in 25 occupational groups and tested for both reliability

and validity. The short-form of the MSQ (Appendix A) was composed of one representative item from each of the 20 scales. The items chosen were those which correlated the highest with their respective scales (Weiss, 1967:13). Separate normative data, and reliability and validity results were available for the short-form.

The MSQ was suitable as a "mail-out" instrument. Since the participants were no longer enrolled in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program, data had to be collected by mail. The MSQ short-form was mailed to all dislocated workers who participated in the job assistance and career advisement components of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. The short-form was selected for data collection because of the relatively short time frame needed to complete the instrument compared to the long-form. Completion of the short-form required only 5-10 minutes while the long-form took between 15-20 minutes to complete.

The MSQ short-form yielded three satisfaction scales: intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction and general satsifaction (Weiss, 1967:13). The general satisfaction scale was used in the study because intercorrelation tests showed a high degree of correlation between the general satisfaction scale and both the intrinsic and extrinsic scales. Therefore, the general satisfaction scales provided a valid measure of overall job satisfaction.

Data for both the job search assistance and career advisement groups was tabulated separately and compared. A general satisfaction score was obtained for each respondent. A mean general satisfaction score and standard deviation was calculated for each group. An

independent t-test was used to test for significant differences between the mean general satisfaction scores of the two groups.

Similar procedures were used to determine differences between the starting wages of the two groups. A mean starting wage and standard deviation was calculated for each group. An independent t-test was used to determine if a significant difference existed between the mean starting wage of the groups.

Population

The population used in these study was very specifically defined by guidelines imposed by the Governor's Employment and Training Office (GETO), the agency funding the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. At the inception, GETO defined eligible dislocated workers as workers who had been permanently terminated because of a reduction in a company's workforce or a plant closing. In addition, dislocated workers were at least 22 years of age, had at least two years of work experience in the occupational field from which they were terminated, were residents of or last worked in Rock County, and were citizens of Wisconsin, If dislocation was caused by a plant closing, certain eligibility criteria were waived.

Selection of Sample

The study compared the job satisfaction and starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers who participated in the job search assistance and career advisement components of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. All dislocated workers who had obtained new employment

and had received services through either of the program components were included in the study sample. Two groups were formed to compare outcomes. One group consisted of participants in the job search assistance component, while the other sample group was composed of dislocated workers who were enrolled in career advisement as well as job search assistance.

Statistical Analysis

General satisfaction scores were computed for each group. The MSQ short-form contained twenty questions about job satisfaction. Respondents were asked their opinions, using a five point scale, about the job they obtained upon completion of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. The general satisfaction score was the sum of the rated value of responses on each of the twenty questions. Mean values and standard deviations were calculated for each group on job satisfaction. Mean starting wages and standard deviations were also calculated by group. An independent t-test was applied to statistically determine if the differences in the mean general satisfaction scores and starting wages between groups were significant at the .01 level.

Research Question

The following two research questions were investigated in the study:

1. Was there a difference in the starting wages of dislocated workers who participated in both job search assistance and career advisement compared to dislocated workers who participated in only job search assistance?

2. Was there a difference in the job satisfaction of dislocated workers who participated in both job search assistance and career advisement compared to dislocated workers who participated in only job search assistance?

Research Hypothesis

The two hypotheses of the study were:

1. Dislocated workers who participated in both job search assistance and career advisement would obtain jobs with a higher mean starting wage compared to dislocated workers who only participated in the job search assistance component.
2. Dislocated workers who participated in both job search assistance and career advisement would have greater satisfaction with their jobs compared to dislocated workers who only participated in the job search assistance component.

Assumptions

In conducting this study, it was assumed that the two sample groups were reasonably homogeneous in demographic characteristics, work ethic, self-esteem and attitudes about unemployment. Another assumption was that the answers to questions about job satisfaction were honest and accurately reflected the respondents' feelings about their present employment situation.

Limitations

This study was limited to the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. Eligibility requirements very specifically defined who could

participate in the program limiting services to dislocated workers who were at least twenty-two years of age, had two year occupational experience in the field they were terminated from, resided or last worked in Rock County, and were residents of Wisconsin. The study was also limited by responses of reemployed dislocated workers to questions about job satisfaction. Responses to such inquiries are naturally subjective were based on individual perception about the job requirements, the occupational field, and satisfaction with previous employment. Self-esteem and personal feeling about unemployment, thereby making any job preferable to not working, could have affected responses. Another limitation was the discrepany in response rates between the two sample groups. The adjusted rate for the job search assistance group was only 28.7 percent compared to 50.9 percent for the career advisement group.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in the study:

Basic Academic Education: Instruction in academic subjects (i.e. reading, mathematics, communications, etc.) needed to compete for and retain a job.

Career Advisement: A five day classroom activity designed to help participants identify vocational interests, aptitudes and current skills. Participants underwent a comprehensive goal setting process and develop a career plan. Supportive personal, social, and vocational counseling needed to support the decision-making process were also included.

Dislocated Workers: As defined by eligibility criteria for the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program, dislocated workers were workers who have been terminated due to a permanent reduction in a company's labor force or a plant closing. They were at least 22 years of age, had a minimum of two years experience in the occupational area from which they were terminated, resided or last worked in Rock County and were residents of Wisconsin (Some of the criteria were waived in the event of a plant closing.)

Job Enrichment: An approach to job redesign that was aimed at building motivators (i.e., opportunities for achievement, greater autonomy and responsibility, shared decision-making, into the job to make it more meaningful and satisfying.

Job Satisfaction: Personal feelings of reemployed dislocated workers about their currrent employment situation.

Job Search Assistance: A four-week activity conducted by Job Service featuring instruction in job seeking skills as well as a supervised job search.

Job Seeking Skills: Refers to those skills needed to prepare and apply for employment including resume writing, interviewing techniques, and job application preparation. This term was also used in reference to classroom instruction that helped

participants organize personal data, prepare a resume, complete sample application forms, and participate in mock interviews that were video-taped and critqued.

Retraining: Occupational instruction through one of the Blackhawk Technical Institute's forty-eight (48) vocational or technical programs, or special short-term training programs.

Supervised Job Search: A program activity where participants receive information on employment opportunities in the area, and contacted employers to schedule job interviews. The activity was supervised by a Job Service employment specialist and participants were required to make a specified number of employer contacts each week.

Wisconsin Job Service: The state funded employment service.

The study was both practical and feasible. The study was intended to determine if one component of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program was more successful than another in helping dislocated workers obtain jobs that were satisfying and had a higher starting wage. The data on outcomes provided the information base necessary for BTI and Job Service personnel to make decisions about the structure of the program. Information gained from the study should ensure that program components in the future are organized to provide maximum assistance to dislocated workers.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The study examined whether reemployed dislocated workers who participated in a combination of job search assistance and career advisement had greater job satisfaction and high starting wages compared to dislocated workers who only participated in job search assistance. Participants of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program who had found new job comprised the sample studied. The sample was divided into two groups, those who had enrolled in career advisement and those who had only participated in job search assistance. Both groups were administered the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) by mail.

A total of 218 questionnaires were mailed with an equal distribution between participants in job search assistance (110) and career advisement (108). Thirty-eight surveys were returned from job search assistance participants for a response rate of 35.2 percent. However, seven forms were discarded because the respondent was unemployed or the questionnaire was incomplete. The adjusted response rate for the job search assistance group was 28.7 percent. For the career advisement sample, sixty-two questionnaires, 57.4 percent of those mailed, were returned. Seven forms were unusable. The adjusted response rate for the career advisement group was 50.9 percent. The overall adjusted response rate for the study was 39.4 percent.

Demographic data was collected to assess the homogenity of the two groups. Information on the sex, marital status, age and educational

background were used for this analysis. The data was collected via the background information section of the MSQ. The MSQ short-form did not contain a question on salary. Since one of the major outcomes examined was starting wages, the background section was modified to include a question on starting wages.

More males responded to the survey than females. Overall, 55.8 percent of the respondents were male. This figure is consistent with the fact that 58.9 percent of the participants in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program who have obtained new jobs were male. The distribution of respondents by sex was similar for each group. The sex of respondents is reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Sex of Respondents by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group		Career Advisement Sample Group	
	No.	%	No	%
Male	16	51.6	32	58.2
Female	15	48.4	23	41.8
TOTAL	31	100.0	55	100.0

Most respondents (59.3%) were married. The marital status of the two groups, shown in Table 2 was comparable. Married participants composed 63.4 percent of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. The marital status of all program participants was consistent with that for reemployed dislocated workers who responded.

Table 2

Marital Status of Respondents by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group		Career Advisement Sample Group	
	No.	%	No	%
Married	18	58.1	33	60.0
Divorced	5	16.1	10	18.2
Never Married	6	19.4	12	21.8
No Data Reported	6	6.4	-	-
TOTAL	31	100.0	55	100.0

The largest portion of respondents (32.6%) were between 30 and 39 years of age. The age of persons who responded to the survey was consistent with the age distribution of Rock County Dislocated Worker Program participants. There was a higher number of 22 to 29 year old respondents in the career advisement group when compared to the job search assistance group., but generally the age distribution between the two groups was similar. The age of persons who returned usable questionnaires is shown in Table 3.

Almost 92 percent (91.9%) of the respondents were high school graduates. This figure was almost 10 percent higher than the 83.5 percent total of all program participants who had obtained new jobs. A little over one-fourth (25.6%) of the respondents had one or more years of education beyond high school, while 9.3 percent were college graduates. The educational background of the respondents is reported in Table 4.

Table 3

Age of Respondents by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group		Career Advisement Sample Group	
	No.	%	No	%
22 - 29	6	19.4	18	32.7
30 - 39	13	41.8	15	27.3
40 - 49	6	19.4	11	20.0
50 & Older	6	19.4	11	20.0
TOTAL	31	100.0	55	100.0

Table 4

Educational Background of Respondents by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group		Career Advisement Sample Group	
	No.	%	No	%
Less Than 12 Years	4	12.9	3	5.5
High School Diploma	14	45.2	31	56.4
Equivalency Certificate	4	12.9	8	14.5
More Than 12 Years	9	29.0	13	23.6
TOTAL	31	100.0	55	100.0

The analysis of outcomes was based on the general satisfaction scores and the starting wages of each sample group. General satisfaction scores were derived from on responses to the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short-form. The MSQ short-form contains twenty questions about job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to answer each question based on their satisfaction with the job they obtained after they left the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. Their opinions were expressed using a five point rating scale. The general satisfaction score was the sum of the rated value of responses on each of the twenty questions. Maximum score was 100 points. Mean values were computed for each sample by adding the general satisfaction scores for each respondent and dividing by the number of respondents within each group. Standard deviations were also calculated for each sample group.

Starting wages was one of the outcomes central to the purpose of the study. The MSQ short-form did not contain a question on wages and the background section of the questionnaire was modified by adding an item on starting wages. Respondents were asked to list their hourly starting wage. The mean starting wage and standard deviation were calculated for each sample group.

The career advisement group had a higher mean general satisfaction score (74.94) than the job search assistance group (71.74). The distribution of scores for the career advisement participants was slightly broader. Mean general satisfaction scores and standard deviation for each group are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation of General Satisfaction Scores by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group	Career Advisement Sample Group
Number (N)	31	55
Mean (x)	71.74	74.94
Standard Deviation (s)	12.41	13.50

The starting wage for the two groups was almost identical, with an eleven cent per hour differential. The job search assistance participants earned $8.26 per hour compared to $8.15 per hour for the career advisement group. However, the standard deviation of wages for the career advisement group was 4.45 almost double the 2.50 for the job search assistance group. This occurred because of the wide dispersion of starting wages for the career advisement group compared to participants in the job search assistance component. The highest ($20.00/hr.) and lowest ($3.44/hr.) wage for all respondents were reported by career advisement participants. The mean starting wage for respondents was $8.19 per hour. This figure was 10.5 percent higher than the $7.41 per hour wage reported for all program participants who had obtained new jobs. Mean wages and standard deviations for the two groups are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Mean and Standard Deviation of
Starting Wages by Group

	Job Search Assistance Sample Group	Career Advisement Sample Group
Number (N)	29	50
Mean (x)	$8.26/hr.	$8.15/hr.
Standard Deviation (s)	2.50	4.45

An independent t-test was used to test for significance on general satisfaction scores and wages. Mean values were tested at the 0.01 level of significance. On general satisfaction scores, no statistically significant difference was indicated between the two groups. The t-test also failed to identify a statistically significant difference between the starting wages of the groups. The calculated t-value on general satisfaction scores and wages are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Calculated t-Value for General Satisfaction
Scores and Starting Wages

	General Satisfaction Scores	Starting Wages
Calculated t-Value	1.097	0.139
Critical t-Value	2.750	2.750

The research hypotheses of the study were that career advisement participants would be more satisfied on the job and would have a higher starting wage than dislocated workers who were only involved in job search assistance. The independent t-test failed to identify statistically significant differences between the groups on either the job satisfaction or starting wage question.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Blackhawk Technical Institute and the local offices of the Wisconsin Job Service have cooperatively conducted a program to assist dislocated workers obtain new employment. This program included a variety of components, but the two primary activities were job search assistance and career advisement. The purpose of this study was to determine whether one of these two components had a greater impact on helping dislocated workers find meaningful jobs. The study examined job satisfaction and starting wages.

Discussion

Since the beginning of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program, BTI and Job Service personnel have had differing opinions about the organization or sequencing of program components. Job Service staff have maintained that dislocated workers possess the occupational skills and work experience needed to obtain new jobs. They lack, however, the skills needed to systematically search out and apply for employment. Providing dislocated workers with information about job opportunities and structured assistance to seek out and apply for jobs, Job Service argued, should be the principle focus of program activities. BTI personnel believed that the job search assistance approach, while it may be appropriate for getting long-term, economically distressed dislocated workers back into the work force, is short-sighted and perpetuates false hope that workers will be able to return to the types of jobs they

formerly had. Job search assistance does not help dislocated workers explore occupational options or address the need for retraining. A more appropriate approach would be to help dislocated workers explore options by developing a career plan prior to searching for a job. Through this type of an effort, dislocated workers would be able to target their job search in occupational areas that were personally meaningful. Two hypotheses were built around this assumption. By participating in career advisement, dislocated workers would have a greater level of satisfaction with their new job and they would earn a higher starting wage.

The findings of the study do not support the hypotheses. On the satisfaction question, those dislocated workers who went through career advisement had an average general satsifaction score of 74.94. This was slightly more than three points above the average score for the group that only participated in job search assistance activities. Statistically this was insignificant and the job satisfaction research hypothesis was rejected.

The level of job satisfaction expressed by reemployed dislocated workers was unrelated to the types of assistance they experienced prior to obtaining their new job. Rock County has long been noted for the quality and productivity of it's workforce. Workers in the area have had a very strong, positive work ethic. Cherrington (1980) pointed out that an individual's personal value system had a bearing on job satisfaction. Workers with strong work values find any type of job fulfilling and rewarding. The findings of the study were indicative of that positive work ethic and strong value system present in workers in the area.

The average starting wage of the two groups was almost identical, differing by only eleven cents per hour. This difference was statistically insignificant. The research hypothesis which stated that participants in career advisement would have a higher average starting wage was rejected. According to the findings, the starting wage was not related to the type of assistance a dislocated worker received prior to finding a new job.

The wage or compensation that a worker receives has an impact on job satisfaction. According to Herzberg (Dawis, 1981:4), compensation is not a job motivator or satisfier. Rather, it influences dissatisfaction. Workers who feel they are paid fairly are less likely to be dissatisfied with the job than those who feel undercompensated. Since the average wage of the two groups was comparable, it would be expected that overall job satisfaction would be similar. There was not a substantial compensation discrepancy which would cause dissatisfaction in either group.

The results of the study reflected similiarities in the job satsifaction and starting wages of the respondents. Overall, the demographic characteristics of the respondents was similar and represented homogenity of the sample group. However, it should be noted that the response rate for the career advisement group was 50.9 percent almost twice the 28.7 percent of return for the job search assistance group. This fact is merely noted without formulating any conclusions about its importance. It would be speculative to anticipate how a higher return rate by job search assistance participants might have altered the

findings. While the difference in the rate of response between the groups was considered substantial, it was not considered serious enough to invalidate the results of the study.

Implications

This study was undertaken in an attempt to determine if significant difference in outcomes resulted from dislocated workers participating in career advisement compared to only receiving job search assistance. Attitudes about job satisfaction and starting wages were the outcomes measured. It was believed that differing outcomes between the two groups would indicate the need to reorganize the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. For the groups studied, job search assistance was the initial program component followed by career advisement. If differences in outcomes had been significant, this would suggest that dislocated workers should go through career advisement before entering job search assistance.

The findings failed to identify significant differences in outcomes between the two groups. The results of the study did not document the need to restructure program components because job satisfaction and starting were not contingent on the type of assistance a dislocated worker received before finding a new job. Rather than a highly structured program with a defined sequence of activities, dislocated workers should be given options and allowed to select and participate in service components they believe will meet their unique needs.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. That the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program Task Force accept the study, review the findings and use the results to guide their efforts in planning program activities.

2. That Blackhawk Technical Institute and Wisconsin Job Service personnel accept the study, review the findings and use the results to create flexibility in the services offered and provide dislocated workers with alternatives that will help them reenter the workforce in jobs that are personnally meaningful and satisfying.

3. That the organization of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program remain unchanged and that the sequence of program activities not be formally restructured.

4. That participants in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program be given options to "pick and choose" program services that they believe will best meet their personal needs.

5. That further follow-up be conducted and that a longitudinal study be undertaken to determine the long-term impact of the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program on job satisfaction and wages of reemployed dislocated workers.

The findings of the study showed that the level of job satisfaction and the starting wages of reemployed dislocated workers were unrelated to the type of services received while enrolled in the Rock County Dislocated Worker Program. The organization of program

components provided flexibility that allowed participants to become involved in activities they believed would meet their personal needs, and would help them obtain jobs that were meaningful and satisfying. Based on the findings of the study, the opportunity for dislocated workers to choose activities that address their needs, rather than establishing a formal structure of services, should be continued and promoted.

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APPENDIX A

MINNESOTA SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE, SHORT-FORM

minnesota satisfaction questionnaire

(short-form)

Vocational Psychology Research

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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minnesota satisfaction questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you a chance to tell **how you feel about your present job,** what things you are **satisfied** with and what things you are **not satisfied with.**

On the basis of your answers and those of people like you, we hope to get a better understanding of the things people **like and dislike about their jobs.**

On the next page you will find statements about your **present** job.

- Read each statement carefully.
- Decide **how satisfied you feel about the aspect of your job** described by the statement.

  Keeping the statement in mind:

  —if you feel that your job gives you **more than you expected,** check the box under **"Very Sat."** (Very Satisfied);

  —if you feel that your job gives you **what you expected,** check the box under **"Sat."** (Satisfied);

  —if you **cannot make up your mind** whether or not the job gives you what you expected, check the box under **"N"** (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied);

  —if you feel that your job gives you **less than you expected,** check the box under **"Dissat."** (Dissatisfied);

  —if you feel that your job gives you **much less than you expected,** check the box under **"Very Dissat."** (Very Dissatisfied).

- **Remember:** Keep the statement in mind when deciding **how satisfied you feel about that aspect of your job.**
- Do this for **all** statements. Please answer **every** item.

Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your **present job.**

Ask yourself: How satisfied am I with this aspect of my job?

***Very Sat.** means I am very satisfied with this aspect of my job.*

***Sat.** means I am satisfied with this aspect of my job.*

***N** means I can't decide whether I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job.*

***Dissat.** means I am dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.*

***Very Dissat.** means I am very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.*

On my present job, this is how I feel about . . .	Very Dissat.	Dissat.	N	Sat.	Very Sat.
1. Being able to keep busy all the time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. The chance to work alone on the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. The chance to do different things from time to time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. The chance to be "somebody" in the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. The way my boss handles his/her workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. The way my job provides for steady employment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. The chance to do things for other people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. The chance to tell people what to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. The way company policies are put into practice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. My pay and the amount of work I do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. The chances for advancement on this job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. The freedom to use my own judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. The working conditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. The way my co-workers get along with each other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. The praise I get for doing a good job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Very Dissat.	Dissat.	N	Sat.	Very Sat.

CONFIDENTIAL

Your answers to the questions and all other information you give us will be held in strictest confidence.

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

1. Check One: ___Male ___Female

2. Check One: ___Married ___Single ___Married

3. When were you born?_____ 19 ___

4. Circle the number of years of school you completed:

4 5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12	13 14 15 16	17 18 19
Grade School	High School	College	Graduate or Prof. School

5. What is your present job called?_____

_____

6. What do you do on your present job?_____

_____

_____

7. How much do you earn per hour? $_____per hour

8. How long have you been on your present job?

_____ Years _____ Months

9. What would you call your occupation, your usual line of work?

_____

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